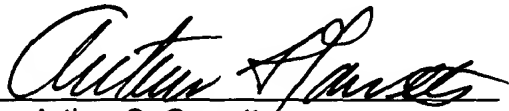


If there is any fee due in connection with the filing of this Preliminary
Amendment, please charge the fee to our Deposit Account No. 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: August 6, 2001

By: 
Arthur S. Garrett
Reg. No. 20,338

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Application Number: 09/857,456
Filing Date: June 5, 2001
Attorney Docket Number: 7203-25

APPENDIX TO AMENDMENT OF AUGUST 6, 2001

Amendments to the Claims

10. (Amended) A method according to [any preceding] claim 2, in which contact between the pipette tip and the air/liquid interface and/or subsequent movement of the pipette tip into the liquid is detected by monitoring pipette capacitance.

11. (Amended) A method according to [any preceding] claim 2, in which if no cell is contacted at or near the interface as or within a predetermined time after contact between the pipette and the interface, the pipette is withdrawn from the interface and then moved back to the interface to repeat the attempt to contact a cell.

12. (Amended) An apparatus for carrying out the method of [any preceding] claim 2, which is a computer controlled apparatus including the following elements:

- i) a patch clamp amplifier;
- ii) a source of variable suction for a patch clamp pipette under the control of the patch clamp amplifier;
- iii) a holder for a capillary tube to be mounted vertically;
- iv) a holder for a patch clamp pipette to be mounted vertically in the same axis as the capillary tube in an inverted orientation with the tip pointing upwardly;
- v) a manipulator for controlling relative movement of the capillary tube and pipette along a common axis of movement under feedback control from the patch clamp amplifier and allowing for the tip of the pipette to enter a downwardly facing end of the capillary tube.

15. (Amended) A computer-program-controlled patch clamping process for carrying out the method of [any of claims 1 to 11] claim 1 or 2.

16. (Amended) A computer-program-controlled patch clamping process for controlling the apparatus of claim 12[,] or 13 [or 14].

17. (Amended) A computer-readable medium carrying a computer program for controlling a computer to implement the method [any of claims 1 to 11 or to control the apparatus of claim 12, 13 or 14] claim 1 or 2.

18. (Amended) A method for controlling a computer by means of a computer program for implementing the method of [any of claims 1 to 11] claim 1 or 2.

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